

In the claims

1-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) An application properties server network comprising:

a plurality of client application servers operating applications using a plurality of computer protocols and requiring configuration variable data to configure the applications for operation;

means for performing configuration services in response to configuration requests from said plurality of client application servers, said means for performing configuration services being coupled to said plurality of client application servers, said configuration services including providing configuration variable data to one of the client application servers in response to receiving an request for configuration variable data from the one client application server, wherein the configuration request includes at least an application ID and a key, wherein further the key is a data string that identifies the configuration variable data being requested;

means for storing and maintaining a system of configuration variable data coupled to said means for performing configuration services wherein the means for storing and maintaining comprises at least an APP table that maintains an entry for each application ID, a version table that maintains an entry for each version under each application ID and an APARM table that contains key-configuration variable data value-pairs associated with each version; and

means for interfacing said plurality of client application servers to said means for performing configuration services.

16. (Original) An application server according to claim 15, wherein said means for interfacing said plurality of client application servers to said means for performing configuration services includes a CORBA server application.

17. (Original) An application server according to claim 16, wherein said means for interfacing said plurality client application servers to said means for performing

configuration services includes a properties server application for handling RMI requests for configuration services.

18. (Currently Amended) An application server according to claim 17, wherein said means for interfacing said plurality of client application servers to said means for performing configuration services includes a common database access library, wherein said common database access library allows changes in said means for performing configuration services without affecting said plurality of client application servers.

19. (Original) An application server according to claim 18, wherein said means for interfacing said plurality of client application servers to said means for performing configuration services includes a database server coupled to said properties server application for handling RMI requests and said CORBA server application for interacting with said means for storing and maintaining configuration information.

20. (Original) An application server according to claim 15, further comprising a Java RMI Application Programming Interface.

21. (Original) An application server according to claim 20, further comprising a CORBA gateway.

22. (Original) An application server according to claim 21, wherein said means for performing configuration service is implemented by a base Java RMI service in a service broker framework.

23. (Original) An application server according to claim 22, wherein said service broker framework is implemented using at least one XML service broker configuration file.

24. (Currently Amended) An application server according to claim 23, wherein said configuration information is stored and retrieved from said means for storing via ~~Key Value Pairs~~ key-configuration variable data pairs.

25. (Original) An application server according to claim 23, wherein said configuration information is stored and retrieved from said means for storing via Hashtable Hierarchy.

26. (Currently Amended) A system for providing an application configuration service, the system comprising:

- an application properties server;

- at least one Java application program of a first client application computer, including application variables that configure the application for operation, networked with said application properties server, the first client application computer generating a request for configuration variable data to configure the application being implemented by the first client application computer;

- at least one-CORBA application program of a second client application computer, including application variables that configure the application for operation, networked with said application properties server, the second client application computer generating a request for configuration variable data to configure the application being implemented by the second client application computer;

- at least one Internet application program of a third client application computer, including application variables that configure the application for operation, networked with said application properties server, the third client application computer generating a request for configuration variable data to configure the application being implemented by the third client application computer;

- one or more application programming interfaces coupled to the application properties server for receiving configuration service requests via a plurality of computer network protocols from each of the first, second, and third client application computers, wherein the requests include at least an application ID and a key, wherein further the key is a data string that identifies the configuration variable data being requested;

- a common database access library coupling the one or more application programming interfaces;

- at least one dynamically-maintainable configuration variable data schema coupled to said application properties server via the common database access library such that the application properties server accesses the configuration variable data in response to the

configuration service requests, wherein the data schema comprise at least an APP table that maintains an entry for each application ID, a version table that maintains an entry for each version under each application ID and an APARM table that contains key-configuration variable data ~~value~~-pairs, ~~and wherein further said common database access library allows changes in the at least one dynamically-maintainable configuration variable data schema without affecting the application properties server.~~

a service broker executing on the application properties server wherein the service broker initializes a plurality of configurable property server objects in response to a configuration service request each object creating a connection to the dynamically-maintainable configuration variable data schema ~~storage medium~~ to retrieve the system configuration variable data via one of a system of key value pairs and a hashtable hierarchy.

27. (Original) A client-server computer system according to claim 26, wherein said data schema comprises configuration information and is at least partially in the form of a database.

28. (Original) A client-server computer system according to claim 26, wherein said data schema comprises configuration information in the form of Lightweight Directory Access Protocol.

29. (Original) A client-server computer system according to claim 27, wherein said application server and said data schema are remotely located to said plurality of client application servers and said configuration information is maintainable by a remote administrator.

30. (Original) A client-server computer system according to claim 28, wherein said application server and said data schema are remotely located to said plurality of client application servers and said configuration information is maintainable by a remote administrator.

31. (Original) The client-server computer system of claim 29, wherein data passes between said application servers and said application server in the form of a string.
32. (Original) The client-server computer system of claim 30, wherein data passes between said application servers and said application server in the form of a string.
33. (Original) The client-server computer system of claim 29, wherein data passes between said application servers and said application server in the form of a hashtables.
34. (Original) The client-server computer system of claim 30, wherein data passes between said application servers and said application server in the form of a hashtables.
35. (Currently Amended) A server system for providing configuration services in response to requests from applications coupled to the server, the system comprising:
- a CORBA application server running an application program including application variables that configure the application for operation, wherein the CORBA application server generates a request for application configuration variable data including at least an application ID and a key;
 - an RMI application server running application program including application variables that configure the application for operation, wherein the RMI application server generates a request for application configuration variable data including at least an application ID and a key, wherein further the key is a data string that identifies the configuration variable being requested;
 - an internet application server running application program including application variables that configure the application for operation, wherein the internet application server generates a request for application configuration variable data including at least an application ID and a key,
- wherein the application servers are all in communication with a centralized application properties server, the application servers providing the requests to the application properties server via a network;

one or more application programming interfaces capable of handling a plurality of software protocols in communication with the application properties server and the application servers; and

a configuration variable data schema in communication with said network, for storing configuration variable data and accessible by said properties server to thereby obtain the configuration variable data and return it to the application server that has requested it, wherein the data schema comprise at least an APP table that maintains an entry for each application ID, a version table that maintains an entry for each version under each application ID and an APARM table that contains key-configuration variable data value pairs.

36. (Previously Presented) A server system according to claim 35, wherein said data schema comprises a relational database.

37. (Original) A server system according to claim 35, wherein said configuration variables comply with Lightweight Directory Access Protocol.

38. (Original) A server system according to claim 35, wherein said one or more interfaces includes a CORBA server application.

39. (Original) A server system according to claim 38, wherein said one or more interfaces includes a server application for handling RMI requests.

40. (Currently Amended) A server system according to claim 39, wherein said one or more interfaces includes a common database access library, wherein said common database access library allows changes in said means for performing configuration services without affecting said plurality of client application servers.

41. (Original) A server system according to claim 40, wherein said one or more interfaces includes a database server coupled to said properties server.

42. (Original) A server system according to claim 35, further comprising a Java RMI Application Programming Interface.

43. (Original) A server system according to claim 42, further comprising a CORBA gateway.

44. (Original) An server system according to claim 43, wherein said properties server is implemented by a base Java RMI service in a service broker framework.

45. (Original) A server system according to claim 44, wherein said service broker framework is implemented using at least one XML service broker configuration file.

46-62. (Cancelled)